tomato and lettuce from the salad. I thought it was mean of him, considering that I'd worked all day in the kitchen while he'd been sitting in the office doing "quarterly entries." I said I did the best I could. He said, mocking me now, that he realized I had my limitations. I got angry then and started to criticize the way the House was run. I did my best, but a lot of people didn't pull their own weight. Adam said something about working for a different House. No doubt about it, he'd do better in a better-run house. I'd heard it all before.

He wanted me to stop thinking about the sink, to come upstairs and have a cigarette. In the office I couldn't help thinking about his remarks, and I said something. I can still see him reaching for that bottle of painkillers. Please don't obsess about the sink, he pleaded. Outside he sat down on some of the railroad ties that lined the little garden. I can still see him. He was wearing a shirt over a T-shirt, running shoes, shorts. I could see the pressure bandage under the brace. Parts of the brace had been repaired with hockey tape. He was wearing his Ray-Bans. He said he could get a factory job.

I told him he was delusional. He was forty, and had a disability, and factory jobs weren't so plentiful any more. It was a delusional fantasy. In reality he was trapped, like all of us. He said it was my thinking that was trapped. I said no, I was just being realistic. He had a wife, an expensive mortgage, two cars to pay for, etc. Where else would he get